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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 004254

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SUBJECT: LEADING SHIA POLITICIAN SHAYKH HUMAM HAMMOUDI LAYS OUT STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Leading SCIRI party member Shaykh Humam Hammoudi laid out a vision on how to achieve democracy in Iraq and gave specific recommendations in the security, political and economic spheres. He highlighted the short-term importance of building Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) committed to democracy through the integration of militias (citing Badr Corps as an example) to fight terrorists and Saddamists and place less emphasis on balance and human rights in the short term. Over the long term, after the terrorists and Saddamists have been defeated, we could then emphasize getting rid of militias from the security forces and improving human rights. This is the first time that a Shia politician has so openly suggested that militia members should be integrated into the ISF in to defeat terrorists and Saddamists so that the long-term goal of democracy be achieved. Hammoudi insisted that majorities must be able to enact legislation. The framework should be "majority rules" -- without requiring 100 percent approval; otherwise, no state could function. He also praised democracy's economic benefits, and highlighted the fact that security is good enough for investment in seven to ten governorates (i.e., the Shia south). He said it should not be difficult to begin major projects, particularly in electricity, oil, and services. END SUMMARY

Let Security Forces (With Integrated Militias) That Support Democracy Deal With Terrorists and Saddamists

¶2. (C) Leading SCIRI member Shaykh Humam Hammoudi highlighted the long-term importance of building state security institutions that have credibility with all communities and respect human rights and basic security apparatuses. He said the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) need forces now that are able to defeat those who oppose democracy (i.e., militias). He used the peshmerga as an example, saying they currently provide security and stability in the north. He added that the long-term goal should be to place the militia under the MOI with close monitoring, but acknowledged that this is not happening now because of the political problems it would create. Hammoudi defended integrating Badr Corps members into ISF, saying that security institutions need "experienced" people who have democratic convictions to help defeat the terrorists. He suggested that after three years, when there is security, these integration decisions can be reviewed.

Majority Rule, Not Consensual Politics

¶3. (C) Hammoudi insisted that majorities must be able to enact legislation and achieve projects in support of democracy. The framework should be "majority rules." No state could function otherwise. Hammoudi added that "all of

the deprived" (Shia, Kurds, and some Sunni) support democracy, as do those who think positively about the U.S. Hammoudi estimated that about 10 percent of Iraqis are against the current democracy, but this 10 percent should not be allowed to affect the goal. Hammoudi decried "consensual" politics, describing it as a poor compromise between democracy and dictatorship, and a violation of the one-person-one vote concept. Hammoudi agreed that Sunnis (but not every Sunni) should be involved in the political process. He said the Shia could have formed a government with just the Kurds, but compromised on the national unity government. He said that democracy where minorities can veto every project is not real democracy.

¶4. (C) Hammoudi said the U.S. and the Shia will both be blamed if the Iraqi democracy fails and both will succeed if it works. Shia live in fear because of what happened to them after the 1920 Revolution and the 1991 uprising, but are not vying for a monopoly of power; Hammoudi credited Grand Ayatollah Sistani for this vision. Highlighting the presence of five Sunnis on the UIC electoral list in Mosul, Hammoudi predicted that sectarian entrenchment in politics will not continue.

Economic Benefits Can Be Achieved Now

¶5. (C) Hammoudi praised democracy's economic benefits and claimed that security is good enough for investment in seven to ten governorates (i.e., the Shia south). He said it should not be difficult to begin major projects particularly in electricity, oil, and services, instead of spending small amounts of funding everywhere.

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COMMENT

¶6. (C) This marks the first time that a Shia politician has so openly suggested that militia members be integrated into the ISF in the short term to defeat the terrorists and Saddamists so that the long-term goal of democracy can be achieved and secured. In Hammoudi's view, once terrorists and Saddamists are defeated, then the state institutions can be built up and defeated enemies brought into the political process. Shia politicians increasingly feel that the Iraqi Police and Army cannot protect their constituents; increasing attacks and casualties have caused many Shia to question the current democratic government and its leaders who encouraged them to support it with promises of a better future.

Speckhard